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Bard

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There could be another one waiting for me,
even for me,

 someone not about knowing,
just an itchy place along the cheek
or a wide-winged raptor, a falcon say
bruised by invisible windows,

as we also maybe are,
who knows why suddenly
we're hurrying towards each other then
brought up short we fall
and that's the end of it,
quest and querent stilled
like a beautiful morning after two days of rain.

Free then. To have no quest
as to have achieved your quest
at last, grass stains on both your clothes.

6 March 2009

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Andromache also
stood beneath the walls,
other half of one argument?
No, kingship
is always the child's,
the child is pitched from the walls,
lands in the air,
no one is ever there. Here.
A wound like that
leaves a fissure in the mind.
Emptiness shows through.

6 March 2009

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This has to be enough.
Because the wings of it
decided not to fly—
a rock is all waiting,
wouldn't you?

Make it big enough to read.
But is it old enough,
am I even, with all the words poured through?
Actually few—

there us another kind of silence
altogether, one with words in it
and another kind of talk we learn to do
wordless, silent, like a smile
waking in a piece of wood.

6 March 2009

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rifle Yiddish as in the woods
of Belarus. Rhineland remembered
seven hundred years.
Time is an energy of forgetting.

6 March 2009

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The clouds are few are attached
with Scotch tape to the sky

there used to be a newspaper
printed in no human language

everybody brought one home
spread it out on the supper table

didn't understand a single word
like you and me

foundlings of grammar
cold soup and stale bread

the words make no sense
but when did they ever

but the picture understands
a naked man holding up two

worlds at once but being
on or under neither so

I do what I do by pure spin
he seems to tell us

but it all is seeming
the words could mean anything

maybe this is the actual language
we'll speak the day after tomorrow

when the rocks below our bodies
finally teach us how to talk.

6 March 2009

(after Maia Dart's *Innerscape 3*)

end of Notebook 311

AND WOOD

the light let
analyze the tree
retroflex, bent back like a tongue
in the mouth to say
a foreign word

wood splays
to show its history.
Which is our story. There is no nature.
Here Lincoln lay in his coma—
who has dared to dream what he dreamed then,
dying, the mind never ceases,
but how often do we mind the mind,

in his dream what empire of red men,
a railroad on the moon, a man's
bare arms cradling him,

Whitman's voice
harsh-friendly calling his name over and over
in our still-dying ears?

This tree
was alive then but the wood won't tell,
yet ring by ring
the circulations of desire yield
a kind of awe-struck guesswork as

from black night grows so slow
the light that comes to drench the curtains—
light calls to us,

we are the god
light worships in its ever-arriving tendance,
light calls and we answer,
god and slave by turns,

as it is written
(where?) desire masters us.

Then we
full of the perplexities of light
gush out into the street.

Dying man,
how is the weather?

I think there is a wind
that comes from France,
the clouds come from the brain,
I do not know if I am what I see
or just me seeing it

or if seeing is itself Another
and we all are blind.

2.

Wood, wood enough,
morning sun on deacon's bench
makes the house a church
and us all in it worshippers
and why not?

Every house is one more god
to live in the mind of—

hold me lord in thy wood

or I could (if I were me)
call out and say
come rest your cool fingers on my mind
and feel me thinking,
you've got the training,
you too are flustered with desire, the fire
of ambition almost smolders down
to the compact intensity, ardent, raying out
of just to be—

but cool, your hands are cool
let them tell us both
what mind is thinking.

End of aria. The blood-

brain barrier remains, the brain-
mind barrier that mystery
shimmers like Bifrost
ice rainbowed over to god realm,
the gold hat in heaven,
wine-well, the all-gone.

3.

So morning is only a weather?
He walked out
cause it was waiting,
it waited while he wasn't
and then he was.

*A my name is Abelard
I come from Aristotle
and I sell apples,
all the Abrahams sell apples
rosy rondures of perfect guilt,*

*but the apples I sell
are sweet with Sein, with what they
call sin, apples
with bite marks left in
from the nibbles of your formulaic teeth—
they cut me because I said
God is a baker and a woman is his bread.*

4.

For Eve was appetite and still is.
She polished up this very wood,
laid it out for me to rest on,
a hard bench keeps men eager.

She painted too the landscape
we see outside the big windows,
the bare smooth beech tree
and up the little hill are three

women holding high above
their heads a single chalice
from which one bird
appears to be drinking—

do birds drink?

7 March 2009

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This was a time when
Americans hid in shame
for what they let their
brothers do, their pallid
uncles grievous with gelt

shame for what they did not
bother to resist, forgot
to protest, made every day
a Sabbath and defiled
each one. Rested.

7 March 2009

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Why did he make only seven days?
Why not an eighth day for us to study
quick-moving clouds in his heaven,
or a ninth day, like one of Richard Strauss's
upward leaping intervals that wrench
the heart in me and tell me this voice
is truth no matter what the word
it sings pretends to say—

o Muse

of music, smug queen of all the others,
did he run out of little gods
to put in charge of Nineday, Tenday?
And when a man is in a coma
does music also sleep?

7 March 2009

THE SIREN

certainly. Sang
means blood in French,
the song
bleeds through language
like an opera being sung in a small
city in eastern Europe you wake up in,
why is she crying?
Why are they dying?

You look out even this local window
this sacred light and see
interminable funeral processions
pass heaped with flowers
mourners with the rosaries
made of gold or glass or pearl or horn.
Every actual thing knows how to grieve

she sang.

A long-beaked bird
looked up from fishing the shallows
as if he'd heard.

But the point
of her song is that no one listens.
That is her liberty
and the freedom of this art of poetry.

And those who pass have waxed their ears
against the plea of song,
the blonde cherubim of music, fierce
emulsions of mixed voices when
she and her sisters get to work
and all their lovers sing—

but in this music every
rock reaches out to crush the boat—
and on the mainland even
when you listen darling
every footstep is your last.

7 March 2009

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Not knowing what to say
she meant everything.

Worth listening to all that—
sunlight in your ears

just supposing, princes at play
smiling at their starving serfs—

yet of all those you see
not one free of anxiety.

7 March 2009

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Everything comes right.

To use the simplest only
words and string them out
until they fall all
natural around
pearlwise your soft neck.

7 March 2009

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I think the simplest vocabulary
makes the subtlest distinctions.

7.III.09

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The grace of it is another thing.
Silver milk pail for the queen.
Dairy Diary: “today a cow kissed me.
I knew her by her spots, she was the same
cow Jupiter proposed to once, Io,
now she feels safer in a woman’s hands,
jealous we may be but have less
need to wield our power. Truth,
sad truth.” I close Marie’s book,
the pretty little Austrian, her neck
once more those diamonds, all
too soon become a kind of history.

7 March 2009